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THE ITALIAN SOCIAL REPUBLIC
(The Fascist Puppet Government)

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Description

An examination of the status and prospects of the present Fascist regime in German-occupied Italy.

15 March 1944

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Appendix: Text of the Verona Manifesto

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Summary

The fall of Mussolini on 25 July 1943 dealt a blow to Italian Fascism from which it has not recovered despite the rescue of the Duce and the establishment of a pseudo-republican regime suppo supported by the Nazis. Leaders of the new regime have emphasized its representative and revolutionary character, but have been unable to conceal its lack of any genuine legal basis. No formal constitution has been promulgated, although the "Verona Manifesto," a Fascist Party program adopted 15 November 1943, contains several articles of a constitutional nature. Diplomatic recognition has been accorded by Axis and satellite states, but has been withheld even by Vichy France, Spain, Finland, and the Vatican.

Administration by the Fascist government is characterized by decentralization, strong Party influence, and limited authority and effectiveness. The decisive voice in all major matters rests with the Germans. The ministries are scattered in various towns throughout northern Italy. Mussolini and his ministers ostensibly exercise both executive and legislative power; the Senate, Chamber of Fasci and Corporations, and Fascist Grand Council have disappeared. The judiciary has been undermined by the creation of special regional tribunals and the extension of military jurisdiction.

All of the most influential members of the regime are Fascists of long standing. Alessandro Pavolini, the Party Secretary, has been far more active and powerful than Mussolini himself. Roberto Farinacci, who holds no governmental position or high Party office, has been able to shape the policies and actions of the Republic because of his prestige as a veteran Fascist. The organization of the Party has undergone no fundamental change, but the Fascist Militia (now incorporated in the Republican National Guard) has become one of the chief weapons of the regime. Its importance exceeds that of the regular armed forces, which have not been effectively reconstituted because of recruitment difficulties and discord in high military circles.

The central aim of the neo-Fascist leadership is to prolong their political domination of Italy. This aim is elaborately but ineffectually disguised by the proclamation of radical political and social aims, which are set forth in the Verona Manifesto and summed up in the official name of "Italian Social Republic." This propagandistic effort has failed to conceal the fact that the regime rests solely upon force. Strikes, guerrilla warfare, and clandestine political opposition clearly demonstrate that the Italian people have no confidence in their present rulers.

The future of the Italian Social Republic as a political regime is entirely bound up with the fate of the German army in Italy. However, certain elements of it which might prove embarrassing to the Allies might be kept alive even after the Germans withdraw from the peninsula. It may be considered expedient to maintain the Fascist Republic as a government-in-exile, or to sponsor neo-Fascist resistance movements behind the Allied lines. The Fascist social legislation may be a source of embarrassment to any future regime of a more conservative character.

I. The Establishment of the Republican Government

A. Fascism after the Fall of Mussolini

The resignation of Benito Mussolini as Prime Minister and Head of the Italian Government on 25 July 1943 was widely hailed as signifying the end of the Fascist regime in Italy. While the accumulated popular discontent of twenty years was being vented in attacks on Fascist buildings and leaders, the new Badoglio government rapidly proceeded to dismantle or neutralize the main elements of the Fascist system. Mussolini was placed in custody and the Fascist Militia was immediately integrated into the Italian armed forces and deprived of its party character, thus minimizing the possibility of organized counter-revolution. A cabinet meeting of 27 July provided for the immediate dissolution of the Fascist Party and abolished the Fascist Grand Council, the Chamber of Fasci and Corporations, and the Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State. In the following days the government abolished various other Fascist organs, appointed a special commission to supervise former Fascist youth organizations and a commission to investigate illicit gains by Fascist officials, made numerous changes of administrative personnel, and announced plans for far-reaching reforms in every department of Italian life. This process was still going on when the armistice was announced on 8 September 1943 and the new government was obliged to leave Rome. Although the eradication of Fascist influences was as yet in no sense complete, remarkable progress had been made in undoing the work of the dictatorship over a period of more than two decades.

Throughout this period certain Fascists groups continued active, apparently with the aim of staging an eventual counter-revolution with German assistance. Such a move was widely expected. The Swedish newspaper Allehanda reported from Bern (29 August 1943) that Berlin was contemplating establishment of "an Italian Fascist regime" in the region north of the Po line and that Italian authorities feared an attempt to liberate Mussolini by "Fascist groups, reconstituted in various places with a view to forming nuclei in order to restore the regime." During the same period the Fascist leaders Roberto Farinacci and Alessandro Pavolini were reported to have taken refuge in Germany and to be planning a Fascist restoration with German backing. 1/ The fact that all preparations for the establishment of the new regime were carried on in Germany was fully confirmed by later events. An eyewitness statement which appeared in the Hamburger Fremdenblatt of 19 September 1943 is typical in this respect:

1/ FCC: Western European Weekly, 17 September 1943, p. A-5; FCC: Special Report #93 ("The National Fascist Government"), 16 December 1943.

"Arriving a few days ago at an Italian airfield from Germany, we saw hundreds of pamphlets containing a proclamation of the newly founded Republican Fascist Party and Mussolini's first five orders. Italian customs officials had disappeared and a German sergeant seemed to be in charge." 1/

B. Establishment of the "National Fascist Government"

The first word of the reestablishment of a Fascist regime was carried on 9 September by the "Radio of the National Fascist Government," broadcasting from Germany only a few hours after the announcement of the Italian armistice by General Eisenhower: "The new National Fascist Government...has taken over power and...repudiates the traitor Badoglio....The new Government is in control of the internal situation and German Commands retain full control of the military situation.... The new National Fascist Government, consisting of servicemen and workers, is founded in the name of Mussolini and acts in his behalf."2/ Broadcasts of the following day explained that the composition of the new government had not yet been announced because of the "ardent hope" that Mussolini might be liberated and "put at the head of the Government, sanctioning or modifying its present formation." The seat of the government, it was stated, had been chosen "outside the capital in a large city." The new regime enjoyed the support of "the better part of the Italian people," and its directives were being followed by military and civilian forces in a growing number of provinces. 3/

The liberation of Mussolini was announced on September 13. Two days later five "Order Sheets" signed by the Duce proclaimed Mussolini's resumption of the supreme direction of Fascism in Italy; named Alessandro Pavolini temporary secretary of the National Fascist Party, henceforth to be known as the "Republican" Fascist Party; instructed all Fascist officials removed from office by Badoglio to resume their posts; decreed the reconstitution of all branches of the Fascist Militia; and ordered full collaboration with the Germans. 4/

Significantly, the first acts and appointments of the new regime concerned the status of the Fascist Party and the Armed Forces. Appointment of General Renato Ricci as Commander-in-chief of the Fascist Militia was a first step in the resuscitation of Fascist military formations. 5/ Mussolini's "liberation" speech of 18 September was addressed

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1/ Press Intell Cable, Geneva, 23 September 1943.
2/ FCC: Daily, 10 September 1943.
3/ Ibid.
4/ Ibid., 15 September 1943.
5/ Transocean, 16 September 1943 (News Digest #1241).

primarily to the Blackshirts; an order of the Duce on the same day released all officers of the Italian Armed Forces from their oath of loyalty to the King. The enhanced position of the Fascist Party in the new regime became even more apparent on 21 September when the new Party Secretary, Pavolini, announced that an order of the Duce gave him provisional authority to ratify all appointments of a national or local character. 1/

The formation of a Council of Ministers was announced by the Italian and German radios on 23 September. 2/ On 27 September the Council met under the presidency of Mussolini and passed resolutions (1) removing the seat of the government to an undisclosed locality, (2) ordering the dissolution of the Senate appointed by the King, (3) joining the Army, Navy, and Air Forces with the Voluntary Militia, (4) fusing the Fascist Trade Unions into a single Union, and (5) extending the Badoglio-appointed Commission for the Investigation of Illegal Acquisitions to cover all persons who had held positions in public life during the last 30 years. 3/

Apparently this meeting also took action to place the Republican Government on a more formal basis. The Rome radio stated on 29 September: "As approved by the Council of Ministers of September 27th, the new Fascist Republican State comes into office. The Constituent Assembly which will soon meet will set down the definite constitutional organization of the State. As from today and until that date, the Duce assumes the charge of head of the new Republican Fascist State." 4/ A final step in the establishment of the "Italian Social Republic" was taken by the first National Assembly of the Republican Fascist Party (Verona, 15 November), which declared: "Those gathered in the present assembly of sovereign power and popular origin [sic] declare the fall of the Monarchy... and proclaim a Social Republic and appoint its head." 5/

C. Legal and Political Position of the Fascist Republican State

1. Constitutional Basis

Notwithstanding its unmistakable dependence on armed force and complete lack of popular consent, the neo-Fascist regime has emphasized from the first its revolutionary and republican character. The

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1/ Rome radio, 21 September 1943 (News Digest #1246).
2/ News Digest #1247.
3/ Transocean, 28 September 1943 (News Digest #1251).
4/ Rome radio, 29 September 1943, 17:00 (News Digest #1252).
5/ FCC: Daily, 17 November 1943.

Party Secretary, Pavolini, declared in a speech broadcast by the Rome radio on 17 September: "Fascism, which is being reborn around the person of the Duce, can be nothing but Republicanism. The Republic does not only mean one constitutional form replacing another. It means a regime of the people, a regime which destroys bridges with the past...."1/ This concept of a popular republic, exercising authority based on a constitution freely approved by all sections of the population, has underlain all of the political and propagandistic maneuvering of the puppet government since its formation.

The plan for a constituent assembly, first broached in the report of the cabinet meeting of 27 September, was repeatedly agitated in the Fascist press during October and November. The Gazzetta del Popolo emphasized the democratic character of the proposed assembly in its issue of 10 October: "The Constituent Assembly must be based on the electoral system in order to make the restoration of the 'sovereignty of the people' in the broadest sense, as the people are entitled to a direct share in the organization of the State. The people must reflect long and thoroughly before entrusting its mandate to its elected deputies. Every voter must be able to express himself completely freely." Apparently it was intended to present a draft constitution to the first congress of the Republican Fascist Party, which met at Verona on 15 November, the constitution then being passed upon by a sort of legislative assembly (tentatively scheduled for 15 December 1943) and made valid by a plebiscite. 2/ No constitution was produced by the Verona Congress, however, and the constituent assembly was postponed to an indefinite future by a decision of the Council of Ministers announced on 17 December: "The Legislative Assembly, which will finally settle the Constitution of the Italian Social Republic and proclaim the Fascist National Republic, will be convened as soon as the Italian Fascist Republic has again taken its place in the struggle."3/

To some extent the lack of a formal constitution is supplied by the so-called "Verona Manifesto," the program adopted by the Verona Party Congress of 15 November 1943. This document, 4/ which serves as a declaration of the political and social principles ostensibly underlying the new state, contains several articles of a strictly constitutional nature. It envisages, among other things, a representative assembly, the right to control and criticize the government, a form of habeas corpus, and the election of at least some categories of public officials.

1/ FCC: Daily, 18 September 1943.
2/ DNB, 5 November 1943 (News Digest #1285).
3/ DNB, 17 December 1943 (News Digest #1320) (emphasis supplies).
4/ Appendix.

2. International Position

a. Diplomatic Recognition

The Fascist Republic has been recognized only by the Axis states and their satellites. German pressure to recognize the new regime appears to have been applied to Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria as early as 18 September, though formal recognition was postponed until 27 September, the anniversary of the Tripartite Pact. During the final days of September the Republican government was recognized by Germany, Japan, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia, the Nanking "National Government of China," Thailand, and Manchukuo. 1/ Some of these countries made it clear that official recognition was accorded only under pressure. It is notable that recognition was not extended by Vichy France, Finland, Spain, or even the Vatican, which is surrounded by the territory of the Republican Fascist State. The fact that some neutral countries such as Spain and Switzerland appear to maintain informal relations with Fascist representatives as a matter of convenience does nothing to strengthen the legal position of the regime, which is not recognized by any of the United Nations governments.

b. Relations with Germany

Notwithstanding the theoretical independence and sovereignty of the Republican government, it is actually as much a German puppet regime as are the quisling governments of other German-occupied countries. While the spheres of responsibility of the Fascist government and the German armed forces do not appear to have been clearly or formally defined, there can be no doubt that the maintenance of the regime depends in the last analysis on the German army, and that the Germans, in return, insist on having the decisive voice in all major matters.

Control by the German "ally" appears, as a rule, to be exercised on the local rather than on the central level, and mainly through the intervention of local military commanders. This intervention has been most noticeable in the economic sphere, particularly in regard to labor relations, manpower policy, and economic and financial control. Italian railways were taken over immediately after the armistice, and are said to be maintained and operated mainly by German personnel. Routine administrative and police work is ordinarily left as much as possible to the local authorities (especially when of an unpopular character), but the Germans have also intervened in matters affecting public security, and anti-Fascist guerrilla fighters have frequently been tried before German courts-martial.

1/ Transocean, 29 September 1944 (News Digest #1251).

II. The Administration of the Italian Social Republic

A. Central Government

1. The Head of the State

The termination of monarchical government in Fascist Italy (even without formal deposition of the King) created a vacuum which could only be filled by expanding the prerogatives of Mussolini as Head of the State. As the Rome radio declared on 29 September: "The new State rises from the ruins of the constitution betrayed by the King. It is therefore obvious that the Duce, who is the author of the new constitution, must also be its head. Only his name and prestige in the world, as well as the credit given him by the /Axis?/ Allies, can give the new republic a guarantee of political, moral, legal and economic consistency in the future." 1/ Thus the Duce combines with his traditional functions as Prime Minister and Head of the Government the symbolic role formerly associated with the monarchy. Theoretically his tenure of this office is not necessarily intended to be permanent. The Verona Manifesto provides that "Every five years the citizen will be summoned to express his opinion about the appointment of the Head of the Republic."

2. The Executive

Such executive power as the central government commands is wielded by the Duce (whose role appears to have been merely nominal) with the aid of his Council of Ministers and their staffs. The various Ministers appear to enjoy more latitude than under the monarchy and are authorized when necessary to issue decrees having the force of law. Such laws and regulations are subject to ratification only by the ministerial council. 2/

Following is the composition of the Cabinet of Ministers:

President of the Council: Benito Mussolini
Under-Secretary of the Presidency of the Council: Francesco Maria Barracu
Minister of Foreign Affairs: Benito Mussolini
Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs: Serafino Mazzolini
Minister of Interior: Guido Buffarini-Guidi
Minister of Finance: Domenico Pellegrini
Minister of Justice: Antonio Tringali-Casanuova (to 1 November 1943)
Pietro Pisenti (since 8 November 1943)

1/ FCC: Daily, 30 September 1944.
2/ Rome radio, 22 October 1943 (News Digest #1273).

Minister of National Defense: Marshal Rodolfo Graziani
Under-Secretary of State for Navy: Vice-Admiral Antonio Legnani (to 10 October 1943), Ferruccio Ferrini (to 14 February 1944), Rear Admiral Giuseppe Sparzani (since 14 February 1944)
Under-Secretary of State for Air: Commander Ernesto Botto (to 7 March 1944), Brig. Gen. Arrigo Tessari (since 7 March 1944)
Minister of Corporative Economy: Silvio Gai (to 1 January 1944) Angelo Tarchi (since 1 January 1944)
Minister of Agriculture: Edoardo Moroni
Minister of Education: Prof. Carlo Biggini
Minister of Public Works: Giuseppe Peverelli
Minister of Communications: Comm. Domenico Arcidiacono
Minister of Popular Culture: Fernando Mezzasoma

According to a reliable source of information, the various ministries are dispersed among ten different cities and towns in northern Italy. Fourteen government offices, including the Presidency of the Council, the Ministry of the Interior, and the national seat of the Republican Fascist Party, are said to be situated at Toscolano-Maderno, a village on the shores of Lake Garda. The Ministries of Finance and Justice are at Cremona; those of Foreign Affairs and Public Works are at Venice; that of Communications at Verona; National Defense and War Production (now merged with Corporative Economy) at Possagno, a village in the Veneto; Agriculture and Forestry at Treviso; Education, Corporative Economy, and Popular Culture at Padua; Navy at Belluno. The General Command of the Militia (now the Republican National Guard) is said to be at Rovigo, and the Confederation of Labor, Technics and Art at Gallarate.

3. The Legislative Power

The neo-Fascist state has no regularly constituted legislative or deliberative assembly. The Chamber of Fasci and Corporations was abolished by Badoglio, and the Senate was dissolved at the first meeting of the Fascist Council of Ministers (27 September 1943). The Grand Council of Fascism, which precipitated the downfall of the Mussolini regime on 25 July 1943, has not been revived.

The Verona Manifesto contemplates the creation of assembly composed of representatives of all syndical and administrative organizations, together with delegates from the "invaded provinces," prisoners of war, Italians abroad, universities, and "other bodies whose participation helps to make this assembly the synthesis of the Nation's values." No steps toward the convocation of such an assembly have been taken, and its functions have not been defined.

In the absence of a regular legislative body, all laws and decrees are promulgated by the Duce, by the Ministerial Council, or by individual ministers. Under present conditions legislation by the central government appears to command less attention than the orders of the German military command, the neo-Fascist armed forces and police, and the local Fascist chiefs. 1/

4. The Judiciary

The Italian judicial system has not been formally overhauled under the Fascist Republic, but the ordinary channels of justice have been more and more replaced by special courts, both civil and military, while the professional judiciary has been subjected to far-reaching "purges."

a. Special Civilian Tribunals

Special Provincial Tribunals, patterned on the notorious Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State, have been set up to deal with anti-Fascist resistance crimes and other wartime cases. 2/ Provincial tribunals were set up in January in Turin, Rome, Genoa, Florence, Bologna, and Perugia to judge members of the Fascist Party "who have betrayed the cause and those who, during the July days committed acts of violence against members and property, or against the regime." 3/

A Special Extraordinary Tribunal was instituted in November by the Council of Ministers to judge "those Fascists who, at the meeting of the Grand Council of 24th/25th July, betrayed their revolutionary ideal and who by their vote offered the King the pretext for the coup d' etat." 4/ This is the tribunal which tried and condemned 19 members of the Fascist Grand Council in January for failure to support Mussolini.

b. Military Tribunals

In November 1943 Defense Minister Graziani issued a decree establishing a Supreme Military Tribunal and several territorial Military Tribunals. 5/ These courts have been primarily concerned with cases involving infractions of military discipline, but they appear to

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1/ Rome radio, 23 October 1943 (News Digest #1273); FCC: Southern European Analysis, 3 February 1944, p. 12.
2/ Rome radio, 23 December 1943 (News Digest #1327).
3/ Rome radio, 14 January 1944 (FCC: Daily, 15 January 1944).
4/ Foreign Office, Research Department: Memoranda on Axis-Controlled Europe #116 ("The Republican Fascist Government"), 30 November 1943.
5/ Corriere della Sera, 25 November 1943 (News Digest #1307).

enjoy a broad jurisdiction and have been active in the trial of anti-Fascist resistance fighters. A decree of the Ministry of Justice, approved by the Council of Ministers on 11 March 1944, "allocates competence of military tribunals to the Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State." 1/

B. Local Government

No formal change in the system of local government has been effected by the neo-Fascist regime, apart from the change of the title of prefect to Capo-Provincia or head of the province. Actual administration has been marked by two significant trends: greater decentralization, and increased Fascist Party influence in local matters.

The trend toward local administrative autonomy reflects the weakness of the central authority and the chaotic state of public communications. Numerous reports describe the impotence of the national government outside of its own immediate neighborhood, and the corresponding tendency of local authorities to seek guidance from the German military commanders rather than from the central government. This state of affairs, against which the central authorities have strongly but unavailingly protested, is said to be particularly marked in the area around Cremona, Piacenza, Parma, and Reggio Emilia, where a kind of "state within a state" is said to function under the orders of Roberto Farinacci, in complete independence of the central government.

Thorough-going changes in the personnel of the local administrations has brought about the removal of virtually all Badoglio appointees and their replacement by old Squadristi, former Fascist Militia officers, and other militant Fascists. In the early months there was some discussion in the German press of the expediency of replacing the long-established dualism of State and Party administration by a single responsible authority, to be assisted by consultative bodies elected on a provincial basis, 2/ but no such steps have been taken.

C. The Fascist Party

1. The Establishment of the Republican Fascist Party

The first official acts of Mussolini after his liberation were directed to the reconstitution of the Fascist Party and its organs. 3/ Efforts were made to represent the "Republican Fascist Party" as a new departure and not a mere revival of the old organization. It was

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1/ FCC: Daily, 14 March 1944.
2/ DNB, 7 November 1944 (News Digest #1285).
3/ Sec. I, B, above.

emphasized that old Party members must make formal application before admittance into the new Party, 1/ and that former non-Fascists would be welcome. The Rome radio stated that the Party would be "mainly composed of young men" and would recruit its members especially from among "the workers, the peasants, lower grade employees, skilled and professional men, rigorously excluding plutocrats and the 'nouveau riche.'" 2/ This effort to create a mass party on semi-proletarian lines appears to have failed: Party membership was officially stated at the beginning of March 1944 to total only 487,000, grouped in 1,072 local fasci. 3/

From the first the new Party has tended to group itself around henchmen of the original Fascist movement rather than around the proletarian ideals of the "Social Republic." This tendency toward restriction of numbers has been welcomed by one group within the regime, headed by Roberto Farinacci, which holds to the concept of a resolute and disciplined elite rather than an unwieldy mass party. Farinacci's organ Regime Fascista wrote in December: "Take care not to fall once again into the old error of enormous numbers; let it be a case of few but good. And if these few are really good, if they know how to show the people what they can do and what they can obtain, if they know how to work to the fullest extent, then the people will be with them." 4/

2. Position of the Party in the New State

The Italian Social Republic is even more closely identified with the Fascist Party than was the monarchical government before 25 July 1943. The organization of the government has been a purely Fascist undertaking, and almost the entire personnel of the regime is composed of Fascists of long standing. This Party grip on the administrative machinery was emphasized by Party Secretary Pavolini (21 September 1943) when he stated that the National Government would extend Party control to all political, military, and administrative activities, and claimed authority to fill both local and national offices pending adoption of the constitution. 5/

The government has from time to time made efforts to disguise this arbitrary system of Party appointments, which runs counter to its professed democratic ideals. An order issued to provincial governors in the name of Mussolini in March 1944 states that, whereas

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1/ Speech of Pavolini, 7 October 1943, reported by Agence Télégraphique Suisse, 9 October 1943 (News Digest #1262).
2/ Rome radio, 7 October 1943 (News Digest #1259).
3/ FCC: Southern European Analysis, 9 March 1944, p. 7.
4/ Rome Radio, 12 December 1943 (News Digest, #1315); FCC: Daily, 10 December 1943.
5/ Rome radio, 21 September 1943 (News Digest #1246).

"mainly political posts" should be entrusted exclusively to Party members of proved loyalty and ability, technical administrative positions may well be entrusted to non-Party members who enjoy the sympathy of the population. 1/

3. Party Organization

The organization of the Republican Fascist Party, pending its crystallization in a new Party statute, 2/ has undergone a number of minor modifications. Certain organs have assumed greater importance than before and a few new posts have been created, whereas both the Grand Council of Fascism, which formerly stood above the highest ranks of both Party and Government, and the Fascist National Council seem to have disappeared without a trace. The most notable new departure is the fact that some classes of Party officials are now elected by local assemblies (theoretically, at least) rather than being appointed by higher authority. It is doubtful whether this democratic procedure has yet been put into effect on any broad basis.

a. Central Organization

Mussolini is still nominally the Duce (leader) of Fascism, though for most practical purposes he seems to have been relegated to the role of ceremonial figurehead.

The Party Secretary, always the most important individual Fascist official except for Mussolini, has gained even more authority under the new Republic. The present Party Secretary, Alessandro Pavolini (whose position is, by his own admission, temporary) nominally controls the Fascist bureaucracy both on the national and regional levels by virtue of a delegation of authority from Mussolini. Pavolini has also taken the leading part in establishing the policies of the Italian Social Republic and in giving neo-Fascism its official leftist political color.

The National Party Directorate, an advisory group of 16 members, was reconstituted by order of the Duce on 19 January 1944, the membership being altered to include representatives of groups connected with the Fascist war effort, such as the Gold Medallists and the association of disabled and crippled servicemen. 3/

1/ Agence Telegraphique Suisse, 10 March 1944 (Press Intell Cable).
2/ FCC: Daily, 20 March 1944.
3/ FCC: Daily, 20 January 1944.

The first meeting, held at Brescia on 1 and 2 March 1944, reviewed the general situation of the Party but does not seem to have arrived at any decisions of importance. 1/

b. Provincial and local organization

The provincial and local organization of the Party has undergone no radical change but appears to reflect the general tendency toward decentralization of authority which also characterizes the state administration.

The provincial Party organization, headed by a Federal Secretary or Commissioner, has been supplemented by the creation of a Federal Triumvirate in each Province, under an order of Pavolini (9 October 1943). The function of this body, comprising (1) the Fascist secretary of the provincial capital and (2) two other Fascists, elected by the Party secretaries of the province and approved by the National Secretary, is to collaborate with the Head of the Province (Prefect) and maintain contact with the various local fasci and with Party headquarters. The Provincial Triumvirate may be called to a Congress for the discussion and approval of the statutes and programs of the Party. 2/

On 23 February 1944 the Party Secretary announced that Provincial Party Directorates would be organized on the same basis as the National Directorate, to include (1) the Provincial Directors of the Confederation of Labor, Technics and Art and the Balilla organization and (2) representatives of the various veterans' and similar associations. 3/ The functions of this body presumably remain purely advisory.

An innovation in the organization of the local Fascio is the election of its principal officers (political secretary, under-secretary, and auditors) by the assembly of the Fascio, subject to approval by the Federal authorities. 4/

c. Subsidiary Party organizations

An effort to revive all of the Fascist educational, cultural, and paramilitary organizations appears to have followed Mussolini's order of 15 September 1943. 5/ The Dopolavoro organization appears to have been reactivated. 6/

1/ FCC: Southern European Analysis, 9 March 1944.
2/ FCC: Daily, 24 February 1944.
3/ FCC: Daily, 24 February 1944.
4/ Corriere della Sera, 9 October 1943 (News Digest #1267).
5/ Sec. I, B, above.
6/ FCC: Daily, 1 December 1943.

The Fascist youth organizations were early mobilized for the support of Republican Fascism under the command of Lieutenant-General of the Militia Renato Ricci, who is also chief of the new Republican National Guard. The Opera Balilla (children's organization) was reestablished on 24 September and claims a membership of 500,000. 1/ A new organization, "Honor and Fight," for Republican Fascist youth in the 18-25 age group, involves an obligation of front-line duty and is apparently viewed as an adjunct to the Armed Forces. 2/

d. The Fascist Militias

The Blackshirt Militia and the various special militias incorporated in the Voluntary Militia for National Security have remained very active. These formations are discussed below together with the Italian Armed Forces, as the Militia proper has been incorporated into a special National Guard and the special technical militias have long been militarized.

D. The Armed Forces

1. Military Policy

The formal decree relative to the constitution of the Republican Armed Forces was not passed by the Council of Ministers until 27 October 1943, 3/ but extensive changes in the military organization of the Fascist state were inaugurated as early as 13 September by Mussolini's order releasing all officers of the Italian Armed Forces from their oath of loyalty to the King. The appointment of Marshal Rodolfo Graziani as Minister of National Defense was announced on 23 September. The first regular meeting of the Council of Ministers emphasized the important role intended for Fascist Party formations in the new forces, announcing that, for the time being, the Armed Forces should be merged with the Fascist Militia -- "the mother cell from which will develop the new Italian Army, no longer Royal but combatant." 4/ This fusion has not been carried out; however, the reorganized Militia tends to overshadow the regular army, navy, and air force, which the Republican regime has been unable to reconstitute effectively. Notwithstanding constant efforts to hasten the reappearance of Fascist combat units on the fighting front, the first communique of the Republican Armed Forces was not broadcast until

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1/ BBC Monitoring Service: Echi d'Italia #263, 3 February 1944.
2/ FCC: Southern European Analysis, 17 February 1944.
3/ Rome radio, 29 October 1943 (News Digest #1280).
4/ FCC: Daily, 30 September 1943.

12 March 1944, and then failed to mention the Republican Army. 1/

2. Army reorganization

Reorganization of the Army has been severely hampered by (1) the difficulties of recruitment, which led early in 1944 to the imposition of the death penalty for certain classes of defaulters, and (2) the doubtful loyalty of many regular Army officers to the new Republic.

The technical organization of the Army was outlined by a decree of Defense Minister Graziani of 20 November 1943. 2/ It has been officially stated that the Republican Army consists of both volunteers and conscripts between the ages of 17 and 37; officers must rise from the ranks, and no commissions may be granted on the basis of social status or wealth, political activity is considered a breach of military discipline. 3/

However, extreme neo-fascists, especially Farinacci, have conducted a campaign against disloyal elements in the Republican Army, charging that officers actually loyal to the Monarchy and Badoglio were accepted into the Army without sufficient check. Farinacci has urged that the military be made more conscious of their responsibilities to the regime and that political commissars be attached to Army units to insure a correct political orientation. Marshal Graziani, as a concession to these demands, announced the appointment of four committees to examine the "military, educational and principally political qualities of all higher active members of the new Army, to make sure that no unreliable elements have found their way into it." 4/ On 11 March he announced that several hundred officers had been eliminated, and that a second purge was contemplated. 5/

3. Air Force and Navy

The reorganization and reconstruction of the Air Force and Navy has been even more nominal than that of the Army, and it does not appear that either service has yet played a significant part in military operations either in Italy or elsewhere. Considerable efforts to recall former officers and enlisted men to their units and to engage new recruits appear to have had no substantial results.

1/ FCC: Daily, 14 March 1944.
2/ Rome Radio, 20 November 1943 (News Digest #1298).
3/ Foreign Office, Research Department: Review of the Foreign Press, Series A, #121, 14 December 1943.
4/ Koelner Staatsanzeiger, 21 January 1944 (Press Intell Cable).
5/ FCC: Daily, 13 March 1944.

4. The Republican National Guard

The Fascist Militia has emerged as the strongest fighting force of the neo-Fascist Republic. It has absorbed and become dominant over the former Royal Carabinieri and the ordinary forces, and constituted the main element in the new "Republican National Guard" announced on 19 November 1943. Its return to prominence may be considered typical of the general reversion to the militant Fascism of early "squadrist" days, when the Fascist Party itself was described as a civilian militia.

According to an announcement of its Commander, Lieutenant General Renato Ricci, the Militia itself is divided into two main branches: (1) the Youth Legionary Militia, formed of volunteers engaged for one year or more, and (2) the Legionary Militia proper, composed of men of military age and including the special industrial and technical Militias which were formerly semi-autonomous. 1/

The formation of the Republican National Guard and the reorganization of all police forces, civil and military, was effected under a decree announced 19 November 1943. 2/ The Republican National Guard consists of the Fascist Voluntary Militia, the Carabinieri (who had come under suspicion of disloyalty as an independent force) 3/ and the Italian Africa Police. It has its own General Command (under General Renato Ricci of the Fascist Militia) and for duties in connection of public order is placed under the Ministry of the Interior. It was announced on 11 February that the strength of the Guard (about 100,000 men) would be at least doubled. 4/

The Republican Police consists of the Administration for Public Safety, the Police Corps, and the Metropolitan Police, and is also under the Ministry of the Interior.

These two forces together share "the tasks of defending at home the institutions and laws of the Republic, of protecting the personal safety and property of the citizens, and of guaranteeing the orderly development of all individual and collective expressions of national activity" -- in other words, of maintaining the regime against internal opposition. Transkontinent Press (11 February 1944) stated that it was intended to employ special units of the National Guard to a greatly increased extent in fighting guerrilla bands. It is noteworthy that members of the Republican National Guard have been the special objects of violent attacks by anti-Fascist resistance elements.

1/ Transocean, 14 October 1943 (News Digest #1265).
2/ Rome radio, 19 November 1943 (News Digest #1297).
3/ Transocean, 14 October 1943 (News Digest #1265).
4/ Transkontinent Press, 11 February 1944

III. Policies of the Italian Social Republic

The central aim of the neo-Fascist regime is to maintain itself in power as long as possible, in the hope that some change in the military and political situation will enable its adherents to save themselves and perhaps even to effect a major comeback. These aims are more or less frankly admitted by the more cynical and ruthless faction within the regime, headed by Roberto Farinacci. Another group, in which Party Secretary Alessandro Pavolini has thus far taken the most prominent role, seeks to camouflage these aims and capture genuine popular approval by giving the regime an advanced democratic and socialistic appearance and stressing its permanent achievements. The "Italian Social Republic" is primarily the creation of this second group. Its official policy, as set forth by Pavolini and others, is the fulfillment of the Fascist program formulated by Mussolini at the close of the first World War. The "Verona Manifesto" of 15 November 1943, in which the policies of the new state have received their most complete embodiment, is essentially a restatement of the San Sepolcro Manifesto of 1919, modified to fit present-day circumstances.

A. Political Reform

In pursuance of its "republican" policy the neo-Fascist government has promised various democratic reforms, some of which have been carried out at least on paper (see above, Sec. II). The strictly hierarchical administrative system is to be modified by permitting the election of certain classes of officials. Labor is to have a decisive voice in the management of industry. A constituent assembly is promised, with delegates (presumably elected) from every stratum of the nation.

However, administrative reform to date has been almost wholly destructive (abolition of the monarchy, the Chamber of Fasci and Corporations, and the Senate), and the promised liberal institutions have failed to materialize. Local administration has become more than ever Party-dominated, and the professional judiciary has surrendered its prerogatives to a system of special tribunals and star Chamber proceedings.

B. Social Policies

The "proletarian" bias of the Fascist Republic was apparent even in the first broadcasts of the National Fascist Radio to Italian workers in Germany: "The new National Fascist Government sees in all of you Italian workers in Germany one of its natural bases...In the social sphere the new Government is determined to continue without

reservation the Fascist path and aims at the most daring and modern achievements." 1/ Alessandro Pavolini similarly keynoted the social aims of the new Party in a radio message delivered soon after the liberation of Mussolini: "As for the new Fascist party, it will, above all, be a workers' party, a proletarian party, creator of a new social cycle. Communism, which the liberals have once again brought back to the limelight, we shall oppose with our resolute determination. We shall suppress any impulse of anarchic disorder. But we shall accept the social ferment brought about by the war and voiced by the people. We shall make it ours and give it life." 2/

Eight of the seventeen articles of the Verona Manifesto deal with social problems. Labor is recognized as the basis of the new State, but private property is guaranteed. Provision is made for the nationalization of big industries and public utilities, and workers' representatives are promised a decisive role in the management of industry, including the determination of wage scales and the sharing of profits. In agriculture, the Verona program envisages the breaking up of large estates, which will be allotted to the peasants or organized in cooperative farms. An ambitious housing plan for workers is foreseen, and all employees are to be registered in a single General Labor, Technical and Art Federation. The Fascist Labor Charter is to be retained.

The general disparity between announced neo-Fascist policies and their realization is particularly evident in the social field. Mussolini's Council of Ministers, at their meetings of January and February 1944, approved elaborate decrees for the "socialization" of Italian industry. These decrees were widely publicized by neo-Fascist propaganda organs as the most revolutionary measures to be taken by any government since the Bolshevik revolution. In effect, however, the socialization decrees are so hedged about with provisos and conditions that they give much more actual control to the State than they do privileges to the workers. Locally and partially, some of the provisions have been put into practice, but no general order to this effect has been issued.

As an instrument to gain the support of the laboring masses, the neo-Fascist social policy has been a complete failure. The widespread strikes which occurred in northern Italy during the first week of March have been widely interpreted as an express repudiation of the Italian "Social Republic" by the north Italian working class.

C. The Church

The Verona Program declared the religion of the Italian Social Republic to be the Roman Catholic and Apostolic faith. Later the new

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1/ FCC: Daily, 10 September 1943.
2/ Rome Radio, 17 September 1943 (FCC: Daily, 18 September 1943).

State officially celebrated the anniversary of the Lateran Treaty of 1929 and proclaimed its adherence to the agreements made between Italy and the Holy See at that time. However, despite these official manifestations of good will, the Vatican has not accorded diplomatic recognition to the new Fascist government, and in consequence has been violently attacked by non-official spokesmen.

The Republican regime considers its benevolent attitude toward the Church as one side of a bargain involving full support of the regime by the Catholic clergy. A German source states the policy thus: "The maintenance of the Christian faith is regarded as a State necessity. A clear national attitude by the clergy is however considered as a prerequisite. Political interference by the clergy or an anti-national attitude will be strictly objected to. The special task of the clergy at the present time will be to fight against Communist and Bolshevik tendencies. A united front based on religion and the Church is particularly meant to prevent the penetration of enemy propaganda." 1/

The Catholic clergy in Italy has not, generally speaking, played the game according to the rules laid down by the Nazi-Fascists. It has supported the policies of the regime only when they happened to coincide with the teachings and practice of the Church. High-ranking clerics have condemned the violence of anti-Fascist resistance groups, but the Church has also condemned the savage reprisals of the Squadristi. The Church has deplored Allied bombings, which have injured ecclesiastical property, but has objected quite as strongly to Fascist violations of Papal extraterritoriality such as the police incursion on the St. Paul basilica in Rome.

The negative attitude of the Church has aroused the anger of certain hot-headed Fascists, especially Farinacci. Such critics attack those Catholics "who remain aloof from the life of the day," and state that "almost the entire community of priests has, for various reasons, lost every feeling of dignity, honor and love." 2/ Unable to win the spontaneous support of the Church, the neo-Fascists have undertaken to enlist Catholics through independent, unofficial channels. Farinacci has sponsored the publication of a pseudo-Catholic, Fascist periodical, Crociata Italica, edited by one Father Calcagno, a priest of rather dubious reputation. In his own paper, Regime Fascista, Farinacci has even threatened the establishment of a National Catholic

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1/ Transocean, 13 November 1943 (News Digest #1290).
2/ Rome Radio, 17 February 1944 (FCC: Southern European Analysis, 24 February 1944).

Church as a rival to the uncooperative, traditional Catholicism, unless the Church adopts a more conciliatory point of view. 1/

D. Anti-Semitism

Soon after the German occupation of northern and central Italy the Nazi-Fascist propaganda organs launched a virulent campaign against Italian Jews, and the German SS, aided by neo-Fascist militiamen, began a series of raids and pogroms. Property of Jews was seized, especially in the resort towns on the Italian Lakes; the owners were arrested and sometimes murdered. 2/

The Verona Program officially announced that persons of Jewish "race" were to lose their Italian citizenship and would be considered of enemy nationality for the duration of the war. Later regulations ordered that all Jews, even those formerly entitled to special privileges, must be sent to concentration camps, their property being confiscated by the state. All persons of mixed parentage were to be placed under special police surveillance. 3/ It appears that the decrees against the Jews have been carried out with the greatest ruthlessness, 4/ in the face of opposition by Catholic spokesmen and contrary to Italian opinion in general.

E. Psychological Warfare

In one sense the whole structure of the Italian Social Republic is an elaborate device of psychological warfare, designed to mask the reality of the rule of force to which German-occupied Italy is subject. All the means of publicity have been brought under Fascist control and adjusted to this general aim.

1. The Press

Immediately following German occupation nearly all north Italian newspapers ceased publication; however, stringent orders soon forced them to resume. As a whole the press was far from enthusiastic about the new order of things, and for several weeks exhibited a sort of guarded passive-resistance. Following a general purge carried out at the insistence of Farinacci and others, all Italian papers in the occupied territory had been brought securely under neo-Fascist domination by the end of October 1943; a single exception was the independent

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1/ Regime Fascista, cited by Agence Telegraphique Suisse, 22 February 1944 (Press Intell Cable).
2/ Dagens Nyheter, 11 October 1943 (News Digest #1263).
3/ FCC: Daily, 1 December 1943.
4/ Der Bund, 15 February 1944 (Press Intell Cable).

Catholic Italia. However, the Ministry of Popular Culture under Mezzasoma felt impelled to purge the editorial offices of the great dailies again in December. Even as late as February 1944 some organs, notable the Milan Corriere della Sera, still showed some signs of independence, but most of the press was reduced to functioning as the mouthpiece of the regime or of one or other of its leaders. 1/

2. The Radio

The radio has been one of the principal propaganda weapons of the Italian Social Republic. The National Fascist Radio, broadcasting via Zeesen and Munich in the first months after the surrender, was generally considered the mouthpiece of Farinacci, who works in close collaboration with the Germans. The Rome radio, after being briefly in German hands, was turned over to the Republican Fascist government and has appeared to voice primarily the official policies of Party Secretary Pavolini.

3. Propaganda Themes

To the familiar themes of Fascism before 25 July 1943, neo-Fascist propaganda has added a new and radical democratic and socialistic coloring, in line with the policies outlined in the Verona Manifesto. The social program of the Fascist Republic is regularly contrasted with the black plutocracy of the Savoy monarchy and the Anglo-American Allies. The introduction of AMG and the participation of Soviet Russia in Italian affairs has given new impetus to the well-worn propaganda themes of American gangsterism, International Jewry, Freemasonry, and the Bolshevik Menace.

Thus far the Fascist propaganda effort appears to have met with only limited success. The effort to maneuver the Church into open support of a war against the "atheistic barbarians" has not succeeded, in spite of widespread displeasure over such incidents as the Monte Cassino bombing. The attempt to portray the Social Republic as a workers' state has provoked the open scorn of the Italian laboring classes. The crusade against alleged Allied vandalism, looting and brutality in southern Italy seems to have made little impression on those Italians who are directly opposed to German requisitions, deportations, and military rule.

F. Foreign and Imperial Policies

Despite the impotence of the Fascist puppet state outside of its own borders and its complete dependence on German military support

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1/ FCC: Southern European Analysis, 1 October, 22 October, 9 December 1943.

the Italian Social Republic claims to have a foreign policy. Its chief aim, according to the Verona Manifesto, is the unity, independence, and territorial integrity of the Motherland. Indispensable living space is demanded for Italy's expanding population, with the right to develop Africa's natural resources, both human and material. The Verona statement also favors an European federation of those nations which desire to eliminate British intrigue from the continent and to abolish plutocratic world capitalism.

Perhaps in order to divert public attention from the Germanization of Italian territories acquired as a result of the last war, the Fascists have kept their imperialistic claims in the foreground. Even more pronouncedly they have underlined the supposed predatory designs of the Allies. Not only are Ethiopia and Libya to be sacrificed, they assert; Sicily is to become a British ward, the Greeks are to take the Dodecanese islands, the Yugoslavs are said to claim most of the Venetian provinces, while the French Committee is reported to covet the Aosta Valley and other border regions of Piedmont and Liguria. This rather negative propaganda is disseminated sparingly; enough to cause indignation and anger against the Allies, though not enough to inspire hopelessness.

IV. Prospects of the Italian Social Republic

In the last analysis the fortunes of the Italian Social Republic are entirely bound up with the fate of the German Army in Italy. It cannot hope to survive the withdrawal of German military force from the peninsula. Meanwhile, though it displays the characteristic weaknesses of a puppet government, it also has certain elements of strength which it would be unrealistic to overlook. These characteristics give it a nuisance value which may persist even after the German Army is withdrawn from Italy.

A. Elements of Weakness

The primary weakness of the Italian Social Republic is its puppet character. The Fascist Republic was forced on Italy by a foreign power without any consultation of Italian opinion, which in the main has proved violently hostile. Furthermore the regime has been discredited by its manifest inability to solve its many problems. The Germans have not hesitated to exploit this weakness to their own advantage. Recognizing the extreme hostility of most Italians toward the Social Republic, the Nazis have dissociated themselves from its more unpopular acts and have even appeared from time to time in the guise of protectors of the Italians against neo-Fascist savagery.

It has frequently been reported that the Germans, dissatisfied with the performance of their puppet, are actually considering discarding it in favor of some form of direct military rule. A Swiss report of January, for example, gives the following picture of Nazi-Fascist relations: "...By freeing the Duce, Hitler fulfilled his honorable obligation towards the 'betrayed' friend, but Hitler's ideas of Mussolini's political and mental powers didn't correspond to the reality. ...The Germans realized too late that Mussolini was virtually dead on July 25. Mussolini realized that he was only a German tool, a useless encumbrance. 'Why didn't they let me die on Gran Sasso,' he keeps groaning to his friends. The Germans cannot forgive themselves for having artificially restored such a dismal puppet as neo-Fascism whose strength and prestige they now estimate exactly...The Germans would most gladly do without the Fascist Republic, but Hitler is bound by his relations with Mussolini and cannot destroy the phantom government he created for the Duce."1/ Whether or not Hitler's personal loyalty to Mussolini plays any part in the German policy of keeping the Fascist regime alive, intimations of this character undoubtedly increase its subservience and further undermine its prestige.

1/ Libera Stampa, 21 January 1944 (Press Intell Cable).

The legal position of the regime is admittedly (and perhaps deliberately) weak. Its lack of any proper constitutional basis, freely admitted in the first months after the armistice, is still cited as grounds for resisting its more extreme enactments. A Swiss report states in connection with the Mussolini decree imposing the death penalty on all defaulters from the Armed Forces: "The opinion is expressed that unless the Constituent Assembly is summoned the Republican State cannot promulgate valid laws....It is also denied that Mussolini has the right to threaten those who do not report for the Army with execution." 1/

Even the location of this quasi-government appears to be unknown to many of its citizens -- a state of affairs which the Corriere della Sera criticizes thus: "In the first place the Government should have not only a political and social address but also a 'postal' one. If owing undoubtedly to force majeure, some small city in Central Italy has not been cleared of its inhabitants and provided with convenient shelters and AA defenses in order to house at least the essential elements of the Ministries, we ask ... our Government to tell us where it can be found by institutions and the people at any moment during this harsh fight. Very important practical as well as political results would thus be achieved. Don't you know that many Italians are asking themselves anxiously what has really become of the Duce?" 2/

The insignificant role assigned to Mussolini is a serious weakness which has undoubtedly diminished the authority of his government. The decline of the Duce has led to an open scramble for power among his Fascist lieutenants, which Mussolini has apparently been powerless to halt. Since the establishment of Republican Fascism, the principal contestants for leadership have been Alessandro Pavolini, Party Secretary, and Roberto Farinacci, the pro-Nazi, ultra-Fascist ras of Cremona, who, although holding neither a public office in the Government nor even a high Party position, may be the most influential single individual in shaping the action of the regime. It has appeared good Nazi policy to maintain the Pavolini-Farinacci rivalry; Pavolini acts as the herald of the new social era, Farinacci as the whiplash of the regime, and neither is strong enough to constitute a real threat to the Nazi hegemony. The star of Marchal Rodolfo Graziani, who was at first thought likely to be the strong man of the Republic, seems definitely to have waned, at least in part because the Germans failed to support the reconstitution of the Republican Army.

1/ Agence Telegraphique Suisse, 22 February 1944 (News Digest #1379).
2/ Corriere della Sera, 23 December 1943 (News Digest #1330).

Even if the details of these intra-Party feuds are not common knowledge in northern Italy, the lack of a single responsible leadership must be clear to all. The situation is succinctly summed up by a Swiss press report: "The north Italian press does not reveal clearly whether the many reports of the far-reaching differences of opinion between individual Fascist Republican personalities, for instance between Mussolini and Farinacci, Pavolini and Farinacci, are true, and if so whether these differences are important for political developments. On the other hand one can easily observe a general irresolution over Party strategy and tactics. Should one be merciful or merciless? Mussolini has not hitherto, in accordance with his former custom, put an end to this wavering by an act of power..." 1/

The notorious unpopularity of the Fascist Republic finds expression in a widespread and vigorous resistance movement. From the very beginning Italians showed their indisposition to obey the orders of the new government. Passive resistance to wartime regulations seems to be practically universal, and the flight of men of military age and others to the "maquis" is well known. Active participants in the resistance movement, both guerrilla and urban, are estimated in the hundreds of thousands. Significantly, the principal victims of the wave of political assassinations which swept over the northern provinces during the winter of 1943-1944 were not German occupation soldiers but neo-Fascist officials and sympathizers.

B. Elements of Strength

Whatever strength the neo-Fascist regime can boast under present conditions derives primarily from its usefulness to the German occupation authorities, on whom its existence depends. Despite their tendency to discredit the Mussolini government and make it the scapegoat for popular resentment, the Nazis evidently find it expedient to prolong the life of the republic as long as it can administer internal affairs at least well enough to spare German manpower for more important tasks. Any delegation of administrative and police responsibility to local authorities obviously helps to relieve the strain on the Reich's own manpower resources.

Subject to the overall sponsorship of the German Army, the Fascist state exists primarily by virtue of the terrorism exercised by the Republican police forces and Fascist gangs. The assurances of Pavolini that irresponsible police groups were not to be tolerated in the Social Republic, and his project for a form of habeas corpus, seem

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1/ Neue Zuercher Zeitung, 17 February 1944 (News Digest #1376).

not to have mitigated the terroristic character of Fascist rule in any way. Farinacci has cried for punishment of anti-Fascists, using such slogans as "Be Brutal" and "An eye for an eye". The proceedings of the Verona Congress were interrupted by the announcement of the assassination of a Party leader in Ferrara; a punitive expedition was immediately undertaken, during which many private houses were plundered and damaged and "disloyal elements" were corralled in the public square prior to their imprisonment. Similar incidents have occurred throughout German-occupied Italy; summary execution is practically an everyday occurrence; the savagery of the neo-Fascists has made them even more intensely hated than the Germans. While this terrorism has undoubtedly had the effect of driving many Italians into open resistance, it is also probable that it has cowed many others into complete submission.

It would be unwise to underestimate the strength which the Republican regime derives from the voluntary collaboration of some Fascist officials, journalists, industrialists and others. Perhaps a majority of the active collaborationists have been connected with the Fascist movement since its inception and would stand to lose everything in the event of an Allied victory. Some industrialists may have accepted the thesis that the defeat of the Nazis and the Republican Fascists would mean real communism for Italy, as distinguished from the pseudo-socialism of the present regime. Other Italians, pressed by the material hardships of war-time conditions, have doubtless supported the puppet government as the only means of assuring their daily bread.

An indirect but not necessarily unimportant source of strength is the doubtful popularity enjoyed by the Badoglio Government and the Allies among north Italians. The Fascist campaign to discredit the Monarchy reinforces an important existing trend in Italian opinion. The conservative character of the Badoglio government, and its inability to "broaden its base" during the months which followed the surrender, have undoubtedly dampened the enthusiasm of large numbers of northern Italians. Similarly, the Americans and British are reported to have lost some of their original prestige as a result of the slowness of the Italian campaign and the difficulties encountered in administering liberated territories. The bombing of industrial and transport centers as well as ecclesiastical localities, and the uncertainty over Allied plans for Italy, also seem to have created a certain amount of uneasiness and even resentment.

The Republican Fascist social program though it has failed to win the allegiance of the Italian working class, is an important enemy weapon against the Badoglio government and the Allies. Notwithstanding the fact that the Italians have gained no real advantages from the new social legislation, it is doubtful whether the industrial population of the north will be willing to accept any future government whose social

policy appears less progressive than the one offered them on paper by the neo-Fascists. Thus, the prospect of having to accept a conservative regime after the defeat of Germany may tend to mitigate the opposition to the present Social Republic.

C. The Outlook

Although it may be assumed that the public existence of the Social Republic will automatically immediately cease when the Germans are driven from Italian territory, it is not impossible that something resembling Mussolini's regime may be kept alive either as a government-in-exile or as an underground movement within the national boundaries.

The nuisance value of the Fascist Republic might well be thought sufficient to warrant its existence as an exile government. Presumably the neo-Fascists could remove to some German center such as Munich, whence they could conduct an anti-Allied radio campaign like that of the National Fascist Radio after the Italian surrender. It has been reported that leading Fascists are already preparing for their departure from Italy; Farinacci's financial representative was said to have recently visited Switzerland. By maintaining a Fascist government in Germany the Nazis might also be in a better position to utilize the large number of Italian workers now in the Reich, as well as to use Fascist funds and commercial interests in Europe.

Whether or not the Mussolini government removes to Germany, it is not at all unlikely that the Republic may sponsor a Fascist underground movement within Italy. A future neo-Fascist maquis might be recruited from the ranks of the present military police forces united under the Republican National Guard. A sufficient number of Italians have committed themselves to neo-Fascism to make up a resistance movement, which could be dangerous both to the Allies and to the legitimate Italian government.

It is also possible that the neo-Fascists may create "fake" resistance movements of the type which have appeared in France. Such false resistance groups would hope to make contact with the Allied forces and place themselves under their protection in order to retain their local control under Allied sponsorship and prepare the ground for an eventual Fascist comeback.

Whatever the fate of the Social Republic as a formal government, the neo-Fascists will undoubtedly seek to keep alive whatever elements of their regime may cause injury or embarrassment to the United Nations. Should the Allies be obliged to maintain military government in Italy over a prolonged period, or to sponsor an Italian regime of definitely conservative character, the surviving Fascists would undoubtedly try to pass themselves off as champions of liberty, social progress,

and national interests. They would contrast the static conditions existing in Allied-controlled territory with the dynamic social plans and legislation of the Italian Social Republic, and would seek to discredit a government saddled with the costs of Italy's unsuccessful war by recalling that they, at any rate, were not involved in the national unconditional surrender.

Appendix: Text of the Verona Manifesto of 15 November 1943 1/

Taking inspiration from Mussolinian achievements, the Fascist Republican Party announces the following program and directives for its action:

(1) Those gathered in the present assembly of sovereign power and popular origin declare the fall of the Monarchy, unanimous in its condemnation of the last King, traitor and deserter, and proclaim a Social Republic and appoint its head.

(2) The Assembly shall be composed of representatives of all the syndical associations and administrative organizations, including representatives of the invaded Provinces, in the form of delegates from those who escaped and reached the free territory of the combatants; and prisoners of war, Italians abroad, Universities, and other bodies whose participation helps to make this Assembly the synthesis of the Nation's values.

(3) The Republican Constitution should ensure citizens, soldiers, and workers the right of control over, and responsible criticism of the actions of public administration. Every 5 years, the citizen will be summoned to express his opinion about the appointment of the Head of the Republic. No citizen arrested 'in flagrante' or detained for preventive measures can be detained more than 7 days, without an order from judicial authority. Except in cases 'in flagrante' an order from judicial authority is necessary for domiciliary search. In the exercise of its functions the magistracy will act in full independence.

(4) Italy's negative electoral experience and negative experience of method of appointment, too rigidly hierarchal, suggest that a mixed system would give better results -- that is, election of representatives to the Chamber and appointment of Ministers by the head of the Republic and Government; and in the Party, elections, subject to ratifications, and not national appointments by the Duce.

(5) The Organization which must compete in the people's education on political problems is indivisable. In it, the Party, an order of fighters and believers, must express itself in an organization of absolute political purity, worthy of being the keeper of the revolutionary idea. Its card will not be asked for in connection with engagement for any post or employment.

(6) The Republic's religion is Catholic, Apostolic, Roman. Other cults will be respected.

(7) Members of the Jewish race are foreigners. For the duration of this war, they belong to enemy nationality.

(8) The main objective of the Republic's foreign policy must be the Motherland's unity, independence, and territorial integrity within the sea and the Alpine boundaries assigned by nature, sacrifice of blood, and history -- frontiers which are threatened by enemy invasion, and by promises of a Government which has taken refuge with London. Another essential objective will be maintenance of the necessity of living space, indispensable to a people of 45,000,000 souls, who have insufficient room for expansion. "This policy must also be directed toward realization of a European community with a federation of all those nations which accept the following principles: (A) -- Elimination of the age old British intrigue from our continent. (B) -- Abolition of that internal capitalist system which fights for world plutocracies. (C) -- Development, for the benefit of the European peoples and the natives, of Africa's natural resources, with absolute respect of those peoples, especially moslems, who, as in Egypt, are easily and usefully organized.

(9) The basis of the Social Republic and its primary objective is manual, technical, and intellectual labor in every form.

(10) Private property, the fruit of individual work, and savings, and the integration of human personality will be guaranteed by the State.

(11) In the national economy, everything which, through scope or function, goes beyond private interests and affects those of (the) collectivity, belongs to the State's sphere of action, and is its property. Public services, and in general, war manufacture must be administered by the State through semi-State bodies.

(12) In every industrial, private, semi-State, and State firm, technical and workers' representatives shall cooperate directly, by means of their intimate knowledge of administration, in the fair apportioning of wages and the fair distribution of benefits from reserve funds, which have resulted from a share of capital and the participation of the workers themselves in these benefits. In certain firms, this can be managed by the extension of the prerogatives of the present factory commission; in others, by the replacement of the executive board by administrative councils consisting of technicians, workers, and State representatives; and in others, by semi-syndical cooperative means.

(13) In agriculture, the proprietors' private action finds its limits at the point where such action fails. The expropriation of undeveloped land and of badly managed firms may lead to the allotment of the land among the hands, transforming them into direct farmers, or to semi-syndical, cooperative, or semi-State firms, according to the various exigencies of agricultural economy. This is already established by existing laws, the application of which is being infused with the necessary impulse by Party and syndical organizations.

(14) Direct producers, artisans, professional people, and artists are fully authorized to carry on their individual productive activities for family or group purposes, provided they fulfil their obligation of handing over to the pools the quantity of goods fixed by law, at the prices established by the controls.

(15) A house will no longer be merely the right of property, but right to property. The Party includes in its program the establishment of a national body for working class houses which, by absorbing the present institute and enlarging its scope, will ensure that a house shall become the property of workers' families of every category, by means of the direct building of new dwellings, or by the gradual acquisition of those already existing. The intention is to affirm the general principle that once rent has been paid, it establishes title of purchase. As its task, this body will solve problems arising from war destruction, by means of requisition and distribution of reparable dwellings and temporary buildings.

(16) The worker is automatically inscribed as a member of his category of syndicate without impediment to his transference to another syndicate when he so demands. Syndicates will converge in one confederation, including all workers, technicians, and professional men, with the exclusion of owners who are not directors or technicians. It will be called the General Labor, Technical, and Art Federation. Employees of State industrial concerns and public service will belong to a one-category syndicate. All the impressive social insurances established by the Fascist Regime during decades remain in their completion, as well as the Labor Charter which in its spirit is the starting point for further development.

(17) The Party regards adequate wages for workers as an inviolable line of action, established by means of national agreements, affecting also small and middle employees, both State and private. So that this measure does not prove to be ineffective and harmful to everyone, it is necessary that, by means of cooperative and individual company syndical shops, the extension of the tasks of the providential organization, and the requisition of shops guilty of contravening the law followed by their cooperative semi-State administration, the result should be obtained that part of the wages should be paid in foodstuffs at official prices. Only in this way can prices be stabilized, together with currency and normality of the market. As regards the black market, there is a demand that speculators, like traitors and defeatists, should come within the sphere of action of the special tribunals, and be liable to the death sentence.

With this preamble to assembly, the Party demonstrates it is not only going out to meet the people but that it stays with them. For

its part the Italian people must realize there is only one way of defending its conquests of yesterday, today, and tomorrow -- to oppose the enslavement plans of the Anglo-U.S. plutocrats, who show in a thousand obvious ways that they want to make the Italian people's lives still more restricted and miserable. There is only one way of attaining these social objectives: fight, work, and win.